

March 29, 2021

The Honorable Gary A. Winfield
The Honorable Steven J. Stafstrom
The Honorable Alex Kasser
The Honorable Matt Blumenthal
The Honorable John A. Kissel
The Honorable Craig C. Fishbein
Joint Committee on Judiciary
Connecticut General Assembly
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Chairs Winfield and Stafstrom, Vice Chairs Kasser and Blumenthal, Ranking Members Kissel and Fishbein, and Members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary,

I am proud to testify in support of **Proposed Bill No. 6321, An Act Concerning the Adoption and Implementation of the Connecticut Parentage Act.**

My wife and I have wanted to have children together since the moment we met in the fall of 2014. We have both dreamed of being mothers and we cannot wait until that day comes. Our journey has been long, and we say that knowing it pales in comparison to what some couples must endure. We got married on New Year's Eve 2018. Six months later, we decided that we wanted to both be pregnant—I would go first—and we would try to find a donor who we knew and felt could be in our children's lives. We asked some people and were turned down. Ultimately, it was my best friend and her husband who volunteered to donate for us. I will never forget seeing a gorgeous double rainbow on a late afternoon, feeling like everything would be alright—I woke up in the morning to my friend's message telling me she and her husband wanted to donate his sperm to support us in starting a family.

We have been working for the Center for Advanced Reproductive Services (CARS) throughout our pregnancy journey. We started with CARS in 2019, and once our donor decided to participate, we went through the rigorous process of lab tests, genetic tests, and therapy sessions. We also needed to make a donor sperm contract to protect all parties. Our friend ultimately donated in January 2020. His donation went through the obligatory quarantine, and—after what felt like an eternity—we were ultimately ready to start trying to get pregnant in July 2020.

I missed my first cycle because my car broke down in Massachusetts, which was devastating. From August through today, we've tried every month except for one and I haven't gotten pregnant. Each time it's out of pocket, and so we've spent thousands of dollars just to have a proverbial seat at the baby-making table. And when we think about how it's been nearly two years since we've embarked on the pregnancy journey, it's hard not to feel disillusioned and defeated by the process.

I'm not sure how long my pregnancy journey is going to be, and I'm not sure how it will end. What I do know is that I am thankful for having a wonderful wife and a beautiful, shared life together. What I do know is we will be loving, caring, and open mothers who will raise our children to be loving, caring, and open people. I also know that I am tired by the process, which feels like there are financial and systemic barriers against us. And I can't fathom what it will feel like to know that our "fight" to have a family—which other people can do without going to court—will continue once we are finally able to have children. We have not embarked on the adoption process but have heard it's long, grueling, and can be cruel to same sex parents.

It would change our lives to have Connecticut's legislature support families like ours. Parentage is not something that's genetic. A parent's love and ability to care for a child is deeper than that. Our love story is unique, and all we want to do is spread love to our future children and to the world. When I get pregnant and have a child, my wife will be just as much a parent as I will be for the child she births. We want a legal system that recognizes and supports this reality.

The Connecticut Parentage Act (CPA) will update the state's parentage law to promote the security of all children. Currently, Connecticut parentage law is outdated and unconstitutional, and it leaves many children without the protection of a legal relationship with their parents. The CPA will correct harmful gaps in current Connecticut law, and help to align the law to the realities of modern families. Most importantly, the CPA will protect children and enable parents to provide the necessary security for their family.

Thank you for your consideration of my testimony regarding Proposed Bill No. 6321.

Sincerely,



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